

Message Text

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44

ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
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R 271721Z SEP 76
FM AMEMBASSY BONN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2152
INFO AMCONSUL MUNICH

C O N F I D E N T I A L BONN 16314

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: MASS, GW
SUBJ: LOCKHEED, NORTHROP AND THE FRG

REF: (A) BONN 16205; (B) 14784(NOTAL)

BEGIN UNCLASSIFIED

1. LATEST VOLLEY IN GENERAL ELECTIONS-RELATED BATTLE OVER ALLEGED ILLEGAL PAYMENTS BY LOCKHEED TO CSU CHAIRMAN FRANZ JOSEF STRAUSS WAS FIRED BY STRAUSS IN INTERVIEW WITH WELT AM SONNTAG SEPTEMBER 26 ISSUE. STRAUSS ASKED RHETORICALLY WHY THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT HAD NOT FOLLOWED EXAMPLES OF JAPAN AND NETHERLANDS IN OBTAINING USG DOCUMENTS ON LOCKHEED AND INITIATING ORDERLY PROCEEDINGS. HIS ANSWER IS THAT THE GOVERNMENT KNEW FROM ITS OFFICIALS WHO HAD BEEN TO WASHINGTON TO INVESTIGATE THE MATTER THAT THE ACCUSATION IT DESIRES FOR THE ELECTION CAMPAIGN IS NOT CONTAINED IN THE DOCUMENTS BUT THE GOVERNMENT WANTS TO MAINTAIN THE IMPRESSION THAT "THERE IS SOMETHING IN IT" UNTIL OCTOBER 3 (ELECTION DAY). FURTHER, THERE IS A POSSIBILITY THAT TRANSACTIONS OF THE MORE RECENT PAST INVOLVING LOCKHEED AND OTHER COMPANIES AND FORMER MINISTER FOR DEFENSE HELMUT SCHMIDT MIGHT COME UP FOR DISCUSSION.

2. STRAUSS ASKED WHY SCHMIDT HAD RECEIVED THE "DIREC-
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TOR GENERAL" OF NORTHROP AND THEN HAD WRITTEN TO

PRINCE BERNHARD AND RECOMMENDED A NORTHROP WEAPONS SYSTEM, OFFERING FINANCIAL AID IF THE NETHERLANDS IMPORTED THAT SYSTEM. STRAUSS SAID THAT THAT WAS TRULY AN INCIDENT THAT SHOULD CAUSE THE PRESS TO MAKE A THOROUGH INVESTIGATION.
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3. COMMENT: FRG MINISTRY OF DEFENSE CHIEF INVESTIGATOR FRITZ JOSEF RATH RECENTLY TOLD EMBOFF THAT HE HAD NO EVIDENCE OF ANY ILLEGAL ACTIVITY BY NORTHROP IN GERMANY. AS NOTED REF B, FORMER CDU MEMBER OF THE BUNDESTAG FRANZ JOSEF BACH ADMITTED TO REPRESENTING NORTHROP THROUGH A SWISS CORPORATION. HIS JOB WAS TO RECOMMEND NORTHROP PRODUCTS TO INFLUENTIAL OFFICIALS IN EUROPEAN GOVERNMENTS WITHOUT REVEALING THAT HE WAS A PAID REPRESENTATIVE OF NORTHROP. HE CLAIMED, HOWEVER, THAT HE LIMITED SUCH ACTIVITIES TO CONTACTS IN COUNTRIES OTHER THAN GERMANY. EMBASSY HAS NO OTHER INDICATION OF NORTHROP ACTIVITY OF THIS NATURE IN GERMANY.
HILLENBRAND

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: BRIBERY, MILITARY AIRCRAFT, MILITARY SALES, INVESTIGATIONS, MULTINATIONAL CORPORATIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 27 SEP 1976
Decaption Date: 28 MAY 2004
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: CunninFX
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976BONN16314
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760364-0696
From: BONN
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760918/aaaaaoxx.tel
Line Count: 82
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION SS
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Reference: 76 BONN 16205
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: CunninFX
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 28 APR 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <28 APR 2004 by BoyleJA>; APPROVED <19 AUG 2004 by CunninFX>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: LOCKHEED, NORTHROP AND THE FRG
TAGS: MASS, GE, US, LOCKHEED
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006